

Message Text

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42

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R 162040Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

TO CINCLANTFLT

INFO COMSOLANT

USDAO CARACAS

SECSTATE WASHDC 6667

UNCLAS PORT OF SPAIN 1708

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OCLR

SUBJ: UNITAS XV VISIT TO TRINIDAD

1. THE DECEMBER 1973 UNITAS XIV VISIT TO PORT OF SPAIN RESULTED IN HIGHLY FAVORABLE LOCAL IMPACT AND GENERATED CONSIDERABLE POSITIVE PUBLICITY. THERE IS A VAST RESERVOIR OF GOODWILL FELT TOWARDS THE UNITED STATES NAVY BY THE TRINIDADIAN MAN IN THE STREET. MANY TRINIDADIAN REFLECT, WITH FOND MEMORIES, TO THE DAYS OF WORLD WAR II AND THE YEARS FOLLOWING WHEN THE CHAGUARAMAS NAVY BASE WAS THE MAJOR EMPLOYER AND A PERSUASIVE CULTURAL FACTOR ON THE ISLAND. IN FACT, MANY TRINIDADIAN STILL OPENLY CONTEND THAT THE NAVY PROVIDED A CRUCIAL ECONOMIC IMPETUS TO THIS NOW INDEPENDENT ISLAND NATION.

2. I AM CONCERNED HOWEVER WITH A DEVELOPING TREND. OVER THE LAST SIX MONTHS, UNITED STATES NAVY SHIP VISITS HAVE EITHER CANCELLED OR REDUCED THEIR VISITS TO BRIEF FUELLING STOPS FOR APPARENT OPERATIONAL REASONS. LITTLE OPPORTUNITY EXISTED TO SHOW OFF OUR SHIPS OR OTHERWISE CAPITALIZE ON THEIR PRESENCE, WHILE IN THIS UNCLASSIFIED

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SAME PERIOD OTHER NATIONS HAVE EASILY REAPED CONSIDER-

ABLE GOODWILL AND PUBLICITY WITH SEVERAL OF THEIR SHIP VISITS. IN LIGHT OF THE CONTEXT I'VE DESCRIBED ABOVE, THE REDUCTION OF THE UNITAS XV VISIT TO A BRIEF DAY'S FUELLING STOP IS A DISCONCERTING DEVELOPMENT. THE UNITAS SHIPS, THEIR FINE CREWS AND THE HIGHLY EFFECTIVE ACCOMPANYING SHOWBAND COULD HAVE A LOCAL IMPACT UNPARALLELED BY ANY OTHER VISIT IN THE RECENT YEAR.

3. STRONGLY URGE THAT THE UNITAS XV PORT OF SPAIN VISIT BE UPGRADED TO A FULL SCALE TWO AND A HALF TO THREE DAY UNITAS PORT VISIT. THIS IS BEST OPPORTUNITY TO BREAK PATTERN OF PAST SIX MONTHS AND ERASE INCREASINGLY PERVASIVE IMPRESSION THAT US NAVY MERELY USING TRINIDAD AS FUELING CONVENIENCE AND NO LONGER ACCORDING COURTESIES WHICH THIS NATION AND ITS LEADERS EXPECT.

MILLER

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